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THE ESSENTIALS OF SOCIALISM



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TORONTO

THE ESSENTIALS OF SOCIALISM

BY
IRA B. CROSS, PH.D.

"Some people study all their lives, and at their
death they have learned everything except to
think."

DOMINGUEZ.

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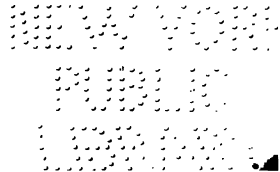
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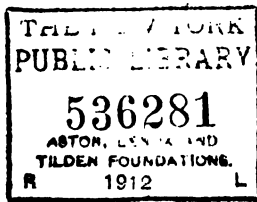
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TO MY WIFE



PREFACE

THE ordinary volume on socialism is either biased in its presentation of the subject or it covers too small a portion of the field by being an historical sketch, a bit of propaganda literature, or merely a discussion of its theoretical foundation. In the following pages I have endeavored to avoid these objectionable features, in the hope that the volume may serve as a handbook to the busy reader or as a textbook for the classroom. My object has been to cover the field usually discussed and to present the subject in such a manner that the reader or instructor may be free to form and express his own opinions and to elaborate or to curtail any part of the discussion that he may desire.

An effort has been made to state fairly and accurately both sides of the issues involved, and although I realize the practical impossibility of attaining this ideal, I cherish the hope that the following statement may prove satisfactory to the advocates as well as to the opponents of this widely discussed and much misunderstood subject.

In the text only American and English publications have been cited. This has been deemed advisable because the ordinary reader does not possess a reading knowledge of Italian, French, or German. With but a few exceptions, magazine articles and pamphlets have also been omitted from the list of references, because the former are without number and the latter are very difficult to obtain. Asterisks (*) have been used to point out the references especially recommended.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge my indebtedness to my colleagues, Professors Alvin S. Johnson, Harry A. Millis, and Burt Estes Howard, all of whom have given much kindly criticism and many helpful suggestions in the preparation of this small volume.

IRA B. CROSS.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY,
November, 1911.

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ESSENTIALS OF SOCIALISM



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

FEW movements in the world's history have attracted the attention or have aroused such bitter opposition as has Marxian or scientific socialism. Various reform measures, popularly called "socialistic," and numerous Utopian schemes for social betterment have always been mildly opposed, but it has been against Marxian socialism that the most strenuous and unending battle has been waged. And like most movements whose followers have been grievously persecuted, it has grown marvellously strong and active, until at the present time it is undoubtedly one of the most widely discussed subjects before the public.

Marxian or scientific socialism is, as Professor Veblen says, "the socialism that inspires hopes

and fears to-day. . . . No one is seriously apprehensive of any other so-called socialistic movement.”¹ Its position of prominence has been attained within a comparatively short time. The roots of its teachings are found in earlier writings, but as a fairly well defined movement it may be said to date from the publication of the “Communist Manifesto” in 1848. This small pamphlet, a manifesto of a revolutionary organization, “The Communist League,” was jointly written by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. It contains in brief and concise form much that was later developed through the writings and speeches of these two German radicals into those principles which to-day form the foundation of the socialist movement throughout the world. The words “socialism” and “socialist” are also of comparatively late origin, no trace of their use having been found prior to 1833.² At first the term “socialist” was applied on the one hand to “the adherents of various Utopian systems — Owenites in England, and Fourierists in France; and on the other hand, [to] the most multifarious social quacks, who, by all manners of tinkering, professed to redress, without any danger to capital and profit, all sorts

¹ *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, vol. xxi., p. 229.

² *International Socialist Review*, vol. vi., p. 45.

of social grievances,—in both cases men outside the working class movement, and looking rather to the ‘educated’ classes for support.”³ That portion of the working class which had become convinced of the insufficiency of such Utopian and variegated reform measures, and which had “proclaimed the necessity of a total social change, that portion then called itself ‘Communist.’” Thus socialism was a middle-class movement; communism was a working-class movement. Socialism was “respectable”; communism was not.⁴ A reversal in the meaning and application of these terms has taken place in later years, so that to-day the advocates of Utopian colony or communistic experiments are called “communists,” while the followers of Marx and Engels, the former communists, are now called “socialists.” Failure to recognize this change accounts for certain errors on the part of some of the critics of modern socialism.

The socialist movement, young though it is, has spread very rapidly, until at the present time there is scarcely any part of the globe free from its enthusiastic, self-sacrificing, and proselyting members. It recognizes no lines of nationality,

³ Engels, Preface to the *Communist Manifesto*, p. 7.

⁴ *Ibid.*

color, race, or creed. The latest available statistics show that the voting strength of the socialists throughout the world is about as follows:⁵—

COUNTRY	VOTES	PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATIVES
Germany	3,250,000	52
France	1,300,000	77
Austria	1,000,000	87
United States	600,000	9 ⁶
Russia	600,000	60 ⁷
England	500,000	40
Belgium	500,000	42
Italy	339,000	44
Finland	337,000	86
Greece	—	20
Switzerland	100,000	7
Denmark	99,000	28
Norway	90,000	11
Holland	82,000	7
Sweden	75,000	36
Spain	40,000	1
Servia	30,000	1
Argentina	5,000	1
Bulgaria	3,000	—
Australian Commonwealth	—	62
South Africa Union	—	4

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⁵ *Hazell's Annual*, 1911. Pp. 399-400.

⁶ *Hazell's Annual* places the number of socialist parliamentary representatives in the United States at nine. This is incorrect. At the close of 1910 there were seventeen socialists in state legislatures and one socialist congressman.

⁷ 1906 returns.

In the United States it is only within the last decade that the socialist movement has attained a position of prominence. During the first half of the nineteenth century the existence of cheap land, political liberty, and freedom of conscience caused this country to be used as an experimental ground by the followers of Owen, Cabet, Fourier, and other Utopians. Numerous colonies were established and many members were enlisted, but almost without exception the outcome proved to be failure of the most dismal and discouraging sort.

It was not until 1876 that any serious attempt was made in the United States to form a political party for the purpose of propagating the principles of socialism. During the next twenty-five years this organization, which later became the Socialist Labor Party, received slight support at the hands of the voters. The causes which contributed to its failure may be summarized as having been the dominance of a strongly individualistic point of view among the American people; the existence of the freedom of the press, of assembly and of speech, the right of trial by jury and of equal manhood suffrage,—all of which removed many of those sources of oppression which abroad had served to unite the working-

class under the banner of socialism ; the presence of large areas of cheap and free land ; the existence of a large land-owning farming class essentially conservative in its point of view ; the absence of fixed class lines ; a uniformly high rate of wages, and a high standard of living ; the antagonistic attitude of the Socialist Labor Party towards "pure and simple" trade-unionism ; and the "foreign" character of the movement, led as it was almost entirely by German immigrants.

With the progress of industry and the growth of population have come changed conditions which have made for an increase in the socialist following. Free and cheap lands of satisfactory quality, which previously served as a sort of safety valve for the discontent of the masses, no longer exist. Coupled with this is a very noticeable increase of tenancy in both city and country. Strikes, lock-outs, boycotts, the "union busting" activities of the capitalists, the seeming partiality shown the latter class by every branch of the government, the difficulty which the unions have had in obtaining labor laws and factory legislation and in having them upheld by state and federal courts, all of these things, and more, have added to the unrest of the working-class and have made its members more willing than ever before to listen to the

arguments of the socialists, who have never neglected an opportunity of driving home the application of their teachings to current problems. Another matter which must not be overlooked is the changed attitude of the socialists towards trade-unionism. Previously it was one of opposition; to-day it is, for the most part, one of approval. Many of the most prominent socialists are also the leaders of the trade-unionists. The dissatisfaction of the voters with the Republican and Democratic parties has caused many to sever their connections with those political organizations and to ally themselves with the socialists as a method of protest. The publication by the popular magazines of articles dealing with the subject of socialism has not only attracted the attention of the public to the growing importance of the issue, but it has also led many to accept its principles and engage in their propagation.

In 1908 the Socialist Party of the United States polled about 500,000 votes. Since that time its following has increased, so that in 1911 there were no less than 435 socialist office-holders in the United States, coming from 33 states and representing about 160 municipalities and election districts. Professor R. F. Hoxie of the University of Chicago, writing under the title of

"The Rising Tide of Socialism," states that in point of function these office-holders include "1 congressman, 1 state senator, 16 state representatives, 28 mayors, village presidents and township chairmen, 3 city commissioners, and 167 aldermen, councillors, and village and township trustees. Sixty-one others occupy important executive, legislative, and departmental positions, so that considerably more than one-half may be said to hold major legislative or municipal positions. Of those remaining, it is noteworthy that 15 are assessors, 62 are school officials, and 65 are connected with the work of justice and police."⁸

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CHAPTER II

THE SOCIALIST INDICTMENT OF CAPITALISM

THE socialists criticise the present system of society most severely, pointing out its weaknesses and vigorously assailing its very foundations. In so doing they make use of the same destructive arguments as are employed by the single taxers, anarchists, and reformers of all sorts, differing from them only in that they lay more stress than do the others upon the element of profits as the fundamental cause for the existence of those conditions which they propose to remedy. The word "profits," as used by the socialists, includes both rent and interest as well as that which is ordinarily designated as profits.

Some of the more important counts in their indictment of capitalistic society may be briefly summarized as follows:—

The existence of slums and sweat shops in our large cities; the prevalence of child and woman labor; the fact that thousands of men, willing to work, are daily unemployed; the increasing concentration of industry and the centralization of

wealth ; the lack of equality of opportunity ; the frequent recurrence of panics and "hard times" ; the anarchy and wastes of competition and of capitalistic production ; the universality of adulteration and of commercial dishonesty ; the injustice of rent, interest, and profits, by means of which the workers are "exploited" ; the presence on all sides of poverty, misery, insanity, crime, drunkenness, and degeneracy ; the breaking up of the home as the result of industrial conditions ; the growing seriousness of the divorce evil ; the traffic in "white slaves" ; the prevalence of graft and corruption ; and the inequality of classes before the law.

This by no means exhausts the list of charges which the socialists bring against capitalistic society ; there are few things in the world to-day which do not suffer criticism at their hands.

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CHAPTER III

SOCIALISM; ITS DEFINITION AND DIFFERENTIATION FROM OTHER SCHEMES FOR SOCIAL BETTERMENT

It is difficult accurately to define or to use the word "socialism," because, as ordinarily used, it may refer, and that correctly, to three distinct things: (1) to a certain set of principles or theories; (2) to a movement, usually a political party, whose members advocate those theories and are eager to attain the goal which the latter represent; and (3) to the prophesied stage of society (socialism), the next after capitalism, which the members of the above movement are striving to bring about. Thus the stage of socialism, or the socialist state, is the goal of the socialist movement, a movement based upon the principles or theories of socialism.

In the ideal socialist state, all of those things employed in the production of wealth, which are used in common, would be owned collectively, while all of those things which the individual uses directly for the satisfaction of his personal wants, or which he uses in his capacity as an individual, would remain the property of the individual.

Thus factories, mines, railroads, telegraphs, telephones, etc., those instruments of production which to-day are being used by millions of people, and upon which countless millions depend for a livelihood, would be owned and operated collectively under socialism ; but a carpenter's tools, or a man's lawn-mower, his clothing, and many other things used solely by him, would be owned by him. The situation would differ from the present primarily in the fact that to-day the greater or more important instruments of production are owned by individuals called capitalists, who hire thousands of men to work for them, and who manage industry with an eye only to their individual profit, while under socialism the industries would be owned collectively by the workers through the medium of the government, and would be managed by them by means of the initiative, the referendum, and the recall,¹ with the interests of the

¹ At present the socialists of the United States use the initiative, the referendum, and the recall in conducting the affairs of their political party, the idea being always to keep the control of the organization in the hands of its dues-paying members. Strange to say, however, these stanch advocates of Democracy are bitterly opposed to the adoption of the direct primary, the reason being that they fear that some other political party, by means of it, might succeed in capturing the socialist organization as soon as it became strong enough to justify the attempt being made.

public always in mind. Thus, under socialism, there would be no capitalist class, because there would be no private ownership of the greater means of production. Socialism, however, would not abolish capital, for there would still remain as great a need for its use in the production of wealth as exists to-day under capitalism. The only change that would occur in this connection is that capital would be collectively, instead of privately, owned.

Socialism is not Government Ownership, although by many people, and strange to say even by some so-called socialists, they are considered as being identical.

The socialists declare that government ownership is a reform which merely substitutes the government, controlled by the capitalists, for the capitalist as an employer of labor. It brings about only a change of taskmasters, and in many respects a most unsatisfactory change, for under government ownership the workers have less control over wages, hours, and the conditions of employment than under private ownership and operation. As a rule, governmental employees are not permitted to form trade-unions, nor can they actively participate in politics. At times of strikes, armed force can be used more effectively

to compel them to return to work. The socialists also argue that any great amount of government ownership would seriously hinder the concentration of industry, and thereby prolong the life of capitalistic society, by doing away with many unfair discriminations, thus enabling the small corporation to compete on an equal footing with the large corporation. It is because of these things that they ordinarily oppose government ownership, although by some it is advocated as a stepping-stone to the establishment of socialism.

The Socialist Movement must not be confused with the Coöperative Movement. They are not the same, although the principle of coöperation lies at the very root of the socialist teachings. Socialists have consistently opposed the policy of *laissez-faire* both in theory and in practice, and declare against all industrial competition. They do not, however, seek to abolish competition in any field other than the industrial, because they feel that under proper conditions competition tends to develop the best that lies within the individual.

The proposed socialist state is known by many as the "Coöperative Commonwealth," because in such a stage of society the principles of coöperation would be carried out to the fullest extent. Nevertheless, there are many regards in which

these two movements differ from each other. Coöperation, or the application of coöperative principles, has been tried many times in the past. Socialism has never been tried, although communistic or coöperative colonies and certain social experiments have been frequently and incorrectly referred to by the opponents of socialism as evidences of its failure and impracticability. Coöperation does not represent a stage in the evolution of society; socialists claim that socialism does. Coöperation is a social reform measure, and can and does exist side by side with capitalism. Socialism is not a social reform measure and cannot exist under capitalism. Coöperation is the voluntary association of interested individuals for the purpose of carrying out some definite object, such as the establishment and operation of coöperative stores, factories, mines, and similar enterprises. Socialism is not a voluntary association of a small number of individuals. Under it all society would be organized upon a coöperative basis, the coöperation being compulsory rather than voluntary.

Socialism is not Profit-sharing. In a profit-sharing establishment, the workers have no direct control over the industry in which they are employed. They labor for a capitalist or for a group of capi-

talists and receive at the end of the year, in addition to wages, a portion of the profits of the business. Like coöperation, profit-sharing is a social reform measure which has been tried and which is in no way opposed to the existence or the continuance of capitalism. Under socialism, there would be no capitalist class ; the workers would control the industries of the nation and would work entirely for themselves, or for what would then be the same thing, society.

Socialism is not Anarchism. Although radically opposed to each other, these two ideals of the future state of society have been and still are constantly confounded with each other. This is to be explained on the following grounds : —

- (a) Both are based upon radical principles.
- (b) The destructive arguments of both follow the same lines of thought.
- (c) In the early days communistic colonies or experiments were proposed and also established by both socialists and anarchists.
- (d) It has not been more than two or three decades since these two ideals became distinct in the minds of their followers. As late as the middle '80's, men who were anarchists thought and called themselves socialists.

A belief in anarchism is based upon the doctrine of Individualism carried to its logical conclusion. Anarchism places the rights and interests of the individual above those of society and leads finally to the ideal of no government. Socialism, on the other hand, is collectivism. From its point of view the rights and interests of society are paramount and must be conserved under all circumstances. Socialism proposes an ideal state in which the collectivity acting through the government carries on the production and exchange of wealth, as well as the greatest possible number of other activities consistent with the welfare of the people. In brief, from the standpoint of the socialists the government is to be all in all, while from that of the anarchist is to be non-existent; the individual is to do everything.

The two ideals also differ on the subjects of religion and the family relation. Anarchism, denying all authority, divine as well as temporal, leads logically to an acceptance of the idea of free love and to a denial of the authority of the Church. It claims that the individual is above the State and the Church, and that consequently he should not be forced to obey the mandates of either. Socialism, on the other hand, is not opposed to religion although there are some social-

ists, as there are some Democrats and some Republicans, who are infidels or even atheists. Socialist congresses and party declarations have steadfastly maintained that religion is a matter with which the socialist party does not concern itself. It is a question that should be settled solely by the individual. The prevalent conviction that socialism is atheistic is due, no doubt, to the fact that a large number of socialists oppose, not religion, but the activity of the Church in behalf of the interests of the capitalist class and in opposition to economic and political reforms. Nor is socialism opposed to the home and the monogamous family, although a few radical and eccentric socialists have expressed ideas to the contrary. The socialists hold that the home is being broken up because of the industrial and social conditions which prevail under capitalism. The employment of women and children in factories and stores, the low wages and long hours, the highly unsatisfactory housing conditions of the working class, the "he" towns of the West and the "she" towns of the East, all make for the breaking up of the home. The socialists argue that only under socialism would it be possible to have more and better homes and consequently a better family relation. Higher wages,

a shorter work day, steady employment, the elimination of profits from the industrial world, all of which they claim would come with socialism, would aid greatly in developing a higher and more ideal home life for the people.

There are two general groups of anarchists : (1) the Individualist or Philosophical Anarchists, and (2) the Anarchist Communists. Briefly, the former believe in the peaceful propagation of anarchistic doctrines, and maintain that a stage of anarchism will come as the result of the gradual extension of the *laissez-faire* policy on the part of the government. The latter advocate the use of violent and revolutionary measures as a means of bringing about the desired ideal.

Nihilism is often confused with both socialism and anarchism, but strictly speaking it is neither. As Kirkup has pointed out,² the name of nihilism "is often erroneously applied to the whole revolutionary movement" in Russia, although it should properly be restricted to the agitations of the period 1855-1870. The nihilists bowed before no authority of any kind, and accepted no principle on faith. "They weighed political institutions and social reforms, religion and the family, in the balances of that negative criticism, which

² *History of Socialism*, pp. 257-258.

was their prevailing characteristic, and they found them all wanting. With revolutionary impatience they rejected everything that had come down from the past, good and bad alike. They had no respect for art or poetry, sentiment or romance." They were interested in the matters of "daily bread for all" and an elementary education for the common people.

Socialism is not Communism. Under socialism, although there would be collective ownership of the means of production and exchange, there would still be private ownership of income. Communism, however, goes one step further and proposes common ownership of income. It usually advocates equality in the division of the products of society. Socialism, on the other hand, is opposed to any and all schemes of "dividing up." Communism also differs from socialism in that those who believe in it do not accept the doctrines of the evolutionary development of society or of the necessity of appealing primarily to the working class in order to bring about the adoption of communistic ideas.

Communism usually takes the form of colony or community experiments, and is most frequently known as Utopian Socialism.³ In the United

³ See pp. 39-40 for a more detailed explanation of Utopian Socialism.

States it is represented by a long line of unsuccessful attempts to introduce the colony mode of life, and reached its point of greatest popularity in the Bellamy or Nationalist movement during the later '80's and the early '90's.

Socialism is not Social Reform. The present day sees a widespread interest in social reform measures in all countries. Social reform retains the dominant features of capitalism, *i.e.* the private ownership of industry and the two economically antagonistic classes, the workers and the capitalists. It seeks to remove only the more flagrant evils of capitalism. Its advocates propose such remedial measures as labor and factory legislation, municipal and political reforms, and an extension of the functions and powers of the government. Socialism, on the other hand, would supplant capitalism by a state of society in which there would be a democratically organized collective ownership and operation of the means of production and exchange. It proposes a complete and radical change from our present system, but only by peaceful means.

For a number of years social reform measures were vigorously opposed by the socialists, but of late there has been considerable discussion regarding the necessity or the advisability of using such

“half-way” means as a method of gradually bringing about the socialist state. But even though some of the socialists, possibly a majority, take this position, they differ from the social reformers in that they consider such measures only as a means to an end, the end being socialism, while the reformers look upon these measures as an end in themselves and feel that their adoption would result in the improvement and retention of the present system of capitalistic industry through the removal of its more glaring evils.

Socialism is not the Single Tax. The advocates of the single tax propose to abolish all taxes save one, a single tax levied upon the value of land exclusive of improvements. It is claimed that such a tax would be just and expedient; that it would greatly increase production by exempting improvements from taxation; that it would abolish speculation in land; that it would be simple and easy of administration; and that it would materially assist in bringing about a more equitable distribution of wealth. The single taxers accept the doctrines of *laissez-faire*, and consequently believe in Individualism, Competition, and Free Trade.

It is argued by the opponents of the tax that it would be difficult to administer; that it would not

supply a sufficient revenue for the government; that it would be unjust because it would tax only the landowners; that it would tend to weaken the idea of private ownership of land; and that it would lead ultimately to the government ownership of land with private use or cultivation.

Contrasting the single tax with socialism, it is to be noted that the advocates of the former recognize only one form of exploitation, rent, and but one oppressor, the landlord, both of which they would abolish. Socialists, on the other hand, argue that profits and interest, as well as rent, are forms of exploitation and can be gotten rid of only by abolishing the private ownership of industry. Thus logically the socialists should believe in the nationalization of land, and some of them do; but it is in connection with this question of what to do with the land that the ideas of the socialists are most indefinite, diverse, and impossible of classification. The single taxers would retain the dominant features of capitalism with its economic classes, with competition between the industrial units, and with private ownership of industry and the consequent exploitation of the workers, all of which the socialists seek to abolish. The single taxers also differ from the socialists in that they *do not recognize* the existence of the class struggle.

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CHAPTER IV

CLASSIFICATION OF THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF SOCIALISTS

ONE of the most important causes of the great confusion and misunderstanding which have arisen in connection with the subject of socialism is the great diversity of views obtaining among those who are called socialists. It is but natural to expect such a diversity if one realizes how comprehensive and all-inclusive are the doctrines upon which the socialist movement is based. A similar confusion of ideas is also found among those who believe in the Christian religion or in the retention of capitalism.

An examination of the different groups or movements among the socialists discloses several points of similarity. All socialists severely condemn the wage system and its evils; they are opposed to what they describe as the industrial anarchy and the wastes of capitalism; they place the interests of society above those of the individual; and they insist that the present order cannot endure, that it must pass away and be succeeded by a stage of

society, socialism, which they believe will be far superior to that which exists to-day.

Among those usually called socialists it is possible to distinguish six distinct groups: (1) Radicals; (2) Christian Socialists; (3) Fabian Socialists; (4) State Socialists; (5) Utopian Socialists; and (6) Scientific Socialists.

Radicals. Those who advocate new and radical measures of social reform are frequently and incorrectly called socialists. This is true of laborites, reformers, and radicals of all kinds. Many who *call* themselves socialists and who take an active part in the socialist agitation are in reality nothing more than humanitarians, radicals, or "advanced" thinkers.

Christian Socialists. Christian socialists may be roughly divided into two groups. The first consists of those who preach to both employer and employee the doctrines of "Love ye one another" and "Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you," with the object of bringing about better industrial and social relations. They believe in the possibility of the application of Christianity to current problems. They are social reformers working for the removal of certain abuses which have crept into *the* present social and industrial order. The sec-

ond group is made up of those who believe that the ideals of Christianity can be realized only under a régime of socialism. Neither group as a rule advocates any of the fundamental principles of scientific or Marxian socialism, or believes in the organization of a political party to carry out the ideals of its members.

Another method of classification discloses two rather well-defined movements among the Christian socialists: first, that of the Protestant Christian Socialism, found for the most part in England with a small following in the United States and in some of the European countries; and secondly, that of Catholic Christian Socialism, which has its stronghold in Catholic Europe. The two movements have separate and distinct histories.

Fabian Socialists. The term "Fabian" is most frequently used to designate the members of the Fabian Society of London, although at times it is also applied to the adherents of the principles advanced by that society. The Fabians are found only in England. The Fabian Society was organized in 1884, and although it has but about 1500 members, it exerts a much more powerful influence than its numbers indicate. It has in its ranks many of the most prominent men and women of England.

The Fabians believe in the abolition of the private ownership of land and industrial capital so far as possible, and in the organization of society upon a collective basis in so far as it is expedient. They are decidedly opportunist in their demands, advocating government and municipal ownership, educating and appealing to all classes, and striving to gain their ends without reference to party lines or affiliations, always using the means nearest at hand regardless of its character. As an organization, the Fabians have never founded a separate political party. In later years they have been content to work chiefly through the Labor Party of Great Britain.

State Socialists. Socialists of the Chair. State socialists believe in extending the functions of the state into fields hitherto occupied by the individual, the idea being to bring about economic and social conditions which will work for the welfare of the people. They would use the present state as a means of accomplishing great economic and social changes, such as government and municipal ownership of various forms of capital, governmental irrigation, reclamation and forestry projects, workingmen's insurance, and various other reforms.

Some modern or scientific socialists object to

state socialism on the ground that it is nothing more than government ownership, and that consequently it would merely replace the capitalistic exploitation of the workers with their exploitation by the government. They claim that it is objectionable because it is favored by the ruling class as a means of quelling the clamor of the workers for socialism, because it will tend to put off the establishment of the coöperative commonwealth, and because it has as its ideal, a military, landlord, and police state, which is not favorably inclined towards democracy and an organized socialistic working class.

Utopian Socialists. The Utopian socialists advocate some plan or arrangement, usually communistic in nature, in accordance with which they desire to organize society upon a perfect basis, thereby removing all objectionable conditions for all time to come. They do not recognize the evolutionary character of society, but basing their arguments upon eternal truths, say "Go to; let us construct a society after our own hearts." They hold that if mankind could only be induced to accept their teachings, they could put their plans for the regeneration of society into practice at once, and they would remain henceforth the permanent state. The Utopians wish to free all

society, and consequently appeal to *all* classes, but more particularly to the educated and the rich.

Scientific or Marxian Socialists. Scientific socialism is based upon the writings of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, particularly upon those of the former, dating from the publication of the "Communist Manifesto" in 1848. These two German radicals wished to make a science of socialism, to put it upon a scientific basis in contrast with the "mish-mash" of critical statements, false theories, and pictures of future society promulgated by the founders of different sects, which in the words of Engels made up the "eclectic, average socialism" of the middle part of the nineteenth century.¹ They set out to explain the origin of capitalistic society, to analyze and account for its dominant characteristics, and to attempt an interpretation of its future development. The outcome of their work is seen in that group of doctrines or theories, known as "Scientific Socialism," which lies at the foundation of the international socialist movement.²

¹ Engels, *Socialism, Scientific and Utopian*, p. 27.

² It is impossible to offer an interpretation of the theories of scientific socialism or of the present attitude of the socialist movement towards these theories which cannot and which will not be seriously questioned by many. In the following pages an effort has been made to state the situation carefully and fairly.

The scientific socialists appeal primarily to the members of the working class whether they are engaged in intellectual or in manual pursuits. With the rallying cry of "The proletarians of the world have nothing to lose but their chains; they have a world to win!"⁸ they call upon the workmen of all countries to unite in opposition to the capitalist or employing class. The economic and social freedom of the working class, and incidentally of society at large, so they declare, can come only through the activity of a united and class-conscious socialistic proletariat. It is because of these things that the scientific socialist movement is known as a "working-class movement," although its propaganda appeals to numerous enthusiasts and humanitarians in all walks of life.

Originally the scientific socialist movement was based upon the following principles: (a) The Evolution of Society; (b) The Economic Interpretation of History with its accompanying doctrine of the Class Struggle; (c) The Marxian Labor Theory of Value; (d) The Marxian Theory of Surplus Value; (e) The Socialist Explanation of Crises; (f) The Right of Labor to its Full Product; (g) The Theory of the Increasing Concen-

⁸ *Communist Manifesto*, p. 67.

tration of Industry ; (*h*) The Theory of Increasing Misery ; and (*i*) The Catastrophe Theory. The years that have elapsed since Marx and Engels wrote have brought many changes in the interpretation of these doctrines, as well as in the attitude of the socialist movement towards them.

(a) The Evolution of Society.

The scientific socialists hold that there is nothing certain but change. Society has passed through various stages : it has never remained stationary, and consequently will continue to evolve. The stages through which it has passed have always been defined by the dominant mode of production, — the use of different kinds of tools in the production of wealth, resulting in the formation of distinct types of social organization. Thus the hand-loom made feudalism possible, while the machine and the steam-engine brought about capitalism. All races or countries have not passed through all stages ; changes have been gradual ; and the remnants of preceding stages exist to-day, even in those countries which are predominantly capitalistic. It is claimed that the next stage into which society will evolve will be that of socialism. The reasons for this contention will *be discussed* in Chapter V.

(b) The Economic Interpretation of History and the Class Struggle.

The economic interpretation of history in the hands of the scientific socialists is a method of explaining the history of mankind and of prophesying the ultimate advent of a régime of socialism.

History has most frequently been interpreted from one of the following points of view or from a combination of several of them : —

(1) Political, which resolves itself into a statement that, "Throughout all history there can be discerned a definite movement from monarchy to aristocracy, and from aristocracy to democracy, and that there is a constant progress from absolutism to freedom both in idea and in institution."

(2) Religious, which is to the effect that one can interpret history from the standpoint of the religious and ethical ideas of a people.

(3) The Great Man Theory, which seeks its explanation of history in the acts, thoughts, and leadership of great men.

(4) Physical environment, which claims that the history of a nation is shaped by its mountains, rivers, climate, and other physiographic features.

(5) Racial characteristics, which explains his-

tory from the standpoint of the racial traits of a people.

The scientific socialists deny the validity of all of these methods of interpreting history and propose instead the "economic interpretation of history." This doctrine is variously known as "economic determinism," "historical materialism," and the "materialistic conception of history." It was not original with Marx and Engels, but it was they who stated it in the most satisfactory manner and who first attempted to make extensive use of it in interpreting the history of mankind and in prophesying the ultimate advent of socialism.

In the words of Engels the economic interpretation of history is to the effect that "in every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organization necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch; that consequently the whole history of mankind (since the dissolution of primitive tribal society, holding land in common ownership) has been the history of class struggles, contests between exploiting and exploited, *ruling and oppressed* classes; that the history of

these class struggles forms a series of evolutions in which, nowadays, a stage has been reached where the exploited and oppressed class—the proletariat—cannot attain its emancipation from the sway of the exploiting and ruling class—the bourgeoisie—without at the same time, and once and for all, emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class distinctions, and class struggles.”⁴

Briefly and concisely stated, the proposition resolves itself into a declaration that “all history is the history of class struggles,” the character of the contending classes being fixed by the prevailing mode of wealth production and exchange. In the past these struggles have resulted “either in the revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.” At present, so the scientific socialists argue, the struggle has narrowed down to a contest between the workers on the one hand and the capitalists on the other. The former can have no interests in common with the latter. Both are arrayed in hostile camps and must continue to war upon each other until finally, through the united action of the workers upon the political or upon the industrial field, or upon both, the

⁴ Preface to the *Communist Manifesto*, p. 8.

capitalist class will be vanquished, capitalism will be destroyed, and socialism will be ushered into existence.

It has sometimes been urged by the critics of Marxian socialism that its followers pit one class against the other, in short that they make the class struggle. The socialists reply that the class struggle is not of their making, but that it is the outgrowth of the prevailing system of industry which groups together on the one hand a constantly increasing large class of propertyless workers, and on the other hand a constantly decreasing class of the men who hire them, or the capitalists. The socialists merely call attention to the existence of the class struggle and urge the workers to make use of it in striving for better conditions under which to live and work. But granting that they do not make the class struggle, it is urged by some that the importance which they give this doctrine in their propaganda and the manner in which its recognition by the working-class is encouraged by them, cannot help but cause both classes to become increasingly bitter towards each other and thus prevent any united action looking towards their mutual benefit.

The importance of the economic interpretation of *history* was greatly exaggerated by Marx,

Engels, and the early socialists. In later years its advocates have softened, and in some regards have almost entirely reshaped, certain parts of the doctrine, so that it has lost a number of its harsh and dogmatic characteristics.

The critics of this method of interpreting history have raised the following objections : —

(1) It is a fatalistic doctrine, placing too much stress upon the influence of environment, and entirely neglecting to take into consideration the actions of a free will.

(2) It overlooks the part played by great men or leaders in the history of a nation. In late years there has been a noticeable return of historians to the "great man theory." This, no doubt, has been due to a very great extent to the prevailing popularity of Nietzsche's philosophy, and to the widespread acceptance of New Thought, Christian Science, and allied movements, all of which lay great stress upon the influence of mind over matter.

(3) It does not consider the influence of spiritual or ethical factors, or of racial traits.

(4) It exaggerates in all connections, political, social, and economic, the importance of the class struggle.

(5) It is socialistic.

(6) It leads to exaggeration by attempting to explain all history from one point of view, a thing which is impossible because of the great complexity of forces which go to shape the history of a nation.

(c) The Marxian Labor Theory of Value.

Second only in importance to the economic interpretation of history, but in no way dependent upon it, is the Marxian labor theory of value. In analyzing value, Marx deals only with conditions as they exist in a stage of capitalism, and consequently defines wealth as an "accumulation of commodities." A commodity is any product of labor that satisfies a human want. As such it has two values, a use value, and an exchange value; that is, (1) having use value, it satisfies a human want, and (2) having exchange value, it can be exchanged upon the market for other commodities, or for money (which is a commodity). It is with the latter kind of value, *i.e.* exchange value, that Marx is concerned.

Although price is exchange value expressed in terms of dollars and cents, exchange value is not price. Prices may fluctuate widely during an hour or a day, yet the value of an article during that *time may* remain the same, just as the level of the

ocean is not affected by the rising or the falling of its waves. Value is more stable than price.

Marx contends that in order that commodities may be exchanged, they must have some element in common. Therefore it is this element that must be used in explaining their value. It must also be used in measuring their value. Commodities, being the product of labor, have a common element in the form of human labor power which has been expended in their production. It is this which creates and measures exchange value. The useless, lazy, or inefficient expenditure of labor-power does not create value; for, as Marx states, that "which determines the magnitude of the value of any article is the amount of labor socially necessary for its production," and "socially necessary labor" is defined as being that which is "required to produce an article under the normal conditions of production and with the average degree of skill and intensity prevalent at that time."⁵ The unit employed by Marx in measuring the value of any commodity is the amount of socially necessary labor contained in a day of simple unskilled labor. It is necessary, therefore, to reduce skilled labor to terms of unskilled labor, but, according to Marx, this is not a difficult task

⁵ *Capital*, vol. i., p. 48.

inasmuch as skilled labor "counts only as simple labor intensified, or, rather, as multiplied simple labor." "Experience," he further declares, "shows that this reduction is constantly being made."⁶

In his explanation of value Marx includes mental as well as physical labor. He also maintains that "labor is not the only source of material wealth. . . . As William Petty puts it, labor is its father and the earth its mother."⁷ Labor, therefore, according to Marx, *does not create all wealth: it creates only exchange values.*

One can say without danger of contradiction that the Marxian labor theory of value has been the one proposition in the Marxian system most vigorously, and in some instances most unintelligently, attacked by the opponents of socialism. All critics contend that it is not in harmony with the facts of the business world. The more important arguments urged against it may be briefly summarized as follows:—

(1) The Marxian theory is not a satisfactory explanation of value because, by considering only those things upon which labor has been expended, Marx excludes from his analysis a large number of articles which possess value.

⁶ *Capital*, vol. i., p. 51.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

(2) It is argued that it is impossible to reduce skilled labor to terms of unskilled labor.

(3) Labor is not the only element possessed in common by things that have value.

(4) Marx does not explain why it is that the expenditure of socially necessary labor creates value. He is satisfied with the mere statement that such is the case and offers no proof.

(5) In the matter of exchange value there are two parties to be taken into consideration: (a) the producer, and (b) the consumer. Marx attempts to analyze value from the standpoint only of the producer.

(6) A commodity to have exchange value must have time, place, and form utility. Primarily Marx considers form utility; indirectly he considers place utility; but he completely ignores time utility. The existence of time utility, even without the expenditure of labor-power, creates exchange value.

(7) Marx errs when he states that mere exchange, *i.e.* buying and selling, does not create value.

(8) It is shown that Marx himself recognized the impossibility of harmonizing his labor theory of value with actual economic conditions, and that he abandoned it in the third volume of his

"Capital" for a "price of production theory," "price of production" equalling the cost of production plus the average rate of profit.⁸

Various disciples of Marx and a few non-socialist apologists have tried to explain away the errors of this theory. Among the foremost of the latter is Werner Sombart, who suggests that "Marx may have been describing not what is, but what, in his opinion, ought to be; all exchange value ought to be created by labor, and when capital is in the proper hands, it will be so." Nothing in any of Marx's writings could lead one to such a conclusion, because he consistently states that exchange value *is* created by the socially necessary labor embodied in a commodity, and at no time does he state that such *ought* to be the case.⁹

Although the labor theory of value is one of the most important in the Marxian system, one is surprised to find the ignorance regarding its real significance and meaning which prevails among the socialists of all countries. This has led many to claim that a belief in socialism does not stand or fall with the acceptance or denial of the labor

⁸ See especially Böhm-Bawerk, *Karl Marx and the Close of his System*, chs. 2, 3.

⁹ See Böhm-Bawerk, *op. cit.*, ch. 5, for an excellent criticism of Sombart's position.

theory of value. Nevertheless, as will be seen from the subsequent sections of this chapter, its denial compels a denial of the greater portion of the Marxian system, for upon it are based a number of the fundamental theories of socialism.

(d) The Marxian Theory of Surplus Value.

To explain the historical development of, and the primary cause for, the existence of capitalism was the task which Marx attempted. He found an explanation for the former in the economic interpretation of history. The latter, he declared, lay in the exploitation of the workers through the appropriation of a portion of their products (surplus values) by the employing or capitalist class. These surplus values arise through the ownership of the means of production by the capitalists who hire men to labor for them, paying in return a wage less than the exchange value of the products which the workers create. This, in brief, is the Marxian theory of surplus value, and although most socialists give Marx the credit for its formulation, its antecedents are found in the writings of earlier radicals, especially in those of the so-called Early English Socialists.¹⁰ Marx, however, elabo-

¹⁰ The group of writers known as "The Early English Socialists" were William Thompson (1786-1833), W. Godwin (1756-

rated ideas which they had advanced and so reshaped them as to produce what to many appears to be a more thorough and complete explanation of the exploitation of the working class.

Marx maintains that surplus value, like exchange value, does not and cannot arise through mere exchange, *i.e.* through buying and selling. It comes into being only through the following process: Labor-power is a commodity, and is bought and sold as is any other commodity. Consequently, its value is fixed by the same laws, that is, by the amount of socially necessary labor required to produce it. The laborer receives a wage sufficient only to maintain his standard of living, or, in other words, sufficient only to support himself and family. By laboring six hours (*necessary labor*) he can produce commodities equal in value to the wage which he receives. But instead of laboring six hours per day the employer hires him to work ten hours. Thus it is that the employer receives the product of ten hours' labor and returns to the worker as wages the value of that part of the product which has been created in six hours. The difference

1836), J. F. Bray, C. Hall (1745-1825), J. Gray, and T. Hodgskin. H. S. Foxwell, in an introductory chapter to Menger, *Right to the Whole Produce of Labor*, presents a most excellent discussion of these writers and their work.

between these amounts, or the product of four hours' labor, the capitalist keeps for himself. The latter is what Marx calls "*surplus value*."

The money or capital which in any industry is used to pay wages, Marx calls "*variable capital*"; that which is used to purchase raw materials, machinery, etc., he calls "*constant capital*." This differentiation is made because from his point of view machines, raw materials, etc., do not affect the value of the product; they do not create exchange value, — they merely transfer their value to the commodities which they assist in producing. Labor alone creates exchange value; it alone introduces the variable element. By creating exchange value, it also creates surplus value for the employer which he appropriates from the products of the workers in the form of rent, interest, and profits.

The amount of surplus value which an employer may appropriate can be increased by the prolongation of the working-day (*absolute surplus value*), or by the curtailment of the necessary labor time¹¹ (*relative surplus value*), which curtailment can be brought about by the increased productiveness of

¹¹ The necessary labor time, as noted above, is the number of hours required by the laborer to create products equal in value to the amount which he receives as wages.

the laborer, by the decreased cost of raw materials, machinery, etc., or by the decreased cost of the laborer's subsistence.

Thus Marx claims that "the appropriation of unpaid labor is the basis of the capitalist mode of production and of the exploitation of the worker that occurs under it; that even if the capitalist buys the labor-power of his laborer at its full value as a commodity on the market, he yet extracts more value from it than he paid for; and that in the ultimate analysis this surplus value forms those sums of value from which are heaped up the constantly increasing masses of capital in the hands of the possessing classes."¹²

The Great Contradiction. In connection with the subject of surplus value, there arises a most interesting problem known as "The Great Contradiction." Briefly stated, it is to the effect that if, as Marx claims, labor alone creates exchange value, hence, also, surplus value, and if it is through the appropriation of the surplus value that the capitalists become wealthy, why is it that they are so eager to replace labor by means of machinery, which, according to Marx, creates no surplus value? Or to state it somewhat differently, how does Marx explain why a capitalist hiring much labor

¹² *Engels, Socialism, Scientific and Utopian*, p. 43.

and using very little machinery (called by Marx a "*high composition of capital*") secures no more than the average rate of profits obtained by an employer who uses much machinery and very little labor (a "*low composition of capital*")?

In meeting this query Marx abandons his socially necessary labor theory of value, and contends that in actual circulation commodities exchange in accordance with what he calls their "price of production," *i.e.* the cost of their production plus the average rate of profit. The average rate of profit, so he claims, is the same for all capitals regardless of their composition, and depends upon the proportion existing between the whole volume of capital and the whole volume of surplus value created, the latter being distributed to all capital, constant as well as variable. As a consequence of the competition which exists between all capitalists for as large a share of this amount of surplus value as they can obtain, all procure no more and no less than the average rate of profits, regardless of the composition of the capitals employed.¹³

Marx's theory of surplus value depends directly upon his labor theory of value. If the latter is

¹³ Cf. Böhm-Bawerk, *op. cit.*, ch. 3; Marx, *Capital*, vol. iii., chs. 8-12.

disproved, the former falls with it. Böhm-Bawerk, the eminent Austrian economist, has made a most careful analysis of these two theories in his admirable volume, "Karl Marx and the Close of his System," and in concluding his discussion of the latter's theory of surplus value,¹⁴ maintains that,

(1) A theory of value is not concerned with the sum total of all commodities and the manner in which their differences are averaged out ; it has to do only with explaining their several exchange relations, *i.e.* the proportions in which separate commodities exchange for one another ;

(2) Marx's law of value does not govern the movement of prices, nor "does it govern with undiminished authority the exchange of commodities in certain primary stages in which the change of value into 'prices of production' had not yet been accomplished ;" and

(3) In a complicated economic system the "prices of production" are not regulated by the Marxian law of value, which, through the "prices of production," governs the actual exchange relations. Marx, on the other hand, claims that such is the case, since the total value of the commodities, determined by the law of value, in its turn, determines the total surplus value, the latter

¹⁴ Chapter 8.

regulating the amount of the average profit and therefore the general rate of profit.

(e) The Socialist Explanation of Crises.

Growing out of the Marxian theory of surplus value is the socialist explanation of panics or business crises. It is maintained that inasmuch as labor creates all exchange value and receives only a small portion of it in return as wages, it necessarily follows that labor cannot purchase all that it produces. It is impossible for the capitalist class to consume all that remains, and as a consequence the surplus products accumulate, finally bringing about a state of over-production, in other words, a panic or a business depression. The possibility of over-production is further heightened by the anarchy of capitalistic industry, which induces each entrepreneur to produce as much as he is able with the idea of getting control of as large a share of the market as possible. The antecedents of this theory are found in the writings of the Early English Socialists and also in those of Rodbertus, a German economist of note.

The great objection to the socialist theory of crises is that it is impossible to explain all crises by means of the one cause of over-production, or,

as it is sometimes called, "under-consumption." Panics may be monetary, financial, or industrial, and may occur because of any one of the following reasons or because of a combination of several of them : —

- (1) Lack of confidence.
- (2) The abuse or undue extension of credit, either by excessive bank credits or by inflated issues of currency.
- (3) The readjustment of conditions made necessary by inevitable changes in values or prices.
- (4) A general fall in prices.
- (5) A general change in prices due to changes in the monetary system.
- (6) Contraction of the circulating medium or an insufficient volume of money.
- (7) Railroad, land, or other kinds of speculation.
- (8) War.
- (9) Failure of crops, bad seasons, etc.

The position of the socialists is also attacked on the ground that if panics are caused only by over-production, or under-consumption, of commodities, how, then, is it possible for a panic to pass away? A very large number of those commodities, which at such times, according to the

socialists, have been over-produced, are of an indestructible and permanent nature and cannot rot away or wear out; the workers are unemployed and have no funds with which to make purchases; the industrial establishments are inactive and need no supplies; how, then, can the accumulated stores be disposed of in order that a demand for them may arise, thus bringing about a revival of industry?

(f) The Right of Labor to the Full Product.

Scientific socialists maintain that as labor creates all exchange values, it should receive them; in other words, it should receive its full product. They claim that under the wage system, or capitalism, such a thing is impossible, because, as has been explained, the capitalist appropriates a part of these values (surplus values) in the form of rent, interest, and profits. With the collective ownership and operation of industry, however, there would be no capitalist class, no surplus values, and no rent, interest, or profits, thus making it possible for labor to receive its full product.

The socialists are opposed to the payment of rent, interest, and profits. They ridicule the justification of the payment of interest as a re-

ward for superintendence, or as a payment for services, for risks taken, for abstinence, or for waiting. They claim that rent, as a portion of surplus value, is an unjust charge for a natural agent, which agent, land, has been appropriated by the individual and made his private property to the exclusion of society. They contend that profits are nothing more nor less than the fruits of robbery or expropriation on the part of the capitalists.

In discussing the right to the full product, one must be careful to distinguish between it and (1) the Right to Subsistence, and (2) the Right to Labor. The former is commonly accepted, and is exemplified in our poor laws, asylums, poorhouses, etc. The Right to Labor may be further subdivided into (1) the Right to Search for Work, which all civilized countries grant to their citizens, and (2) the Right to Demand Work, which means that any one without employment may demand and receive it at the hands of the government. This latter privilege is not recognized by any country.

The claim of the scientific socialists that labor should receive its full product is attacked in the first place on the ground that it is based upon a false premise, *i.e.* the labor theory of

value. Secondly, it is argued that it is impossible to determine accurately what the full product of labor amounts to. Approximation alone is possible, but approximation would not give labor its full product, and consequently would result in partial exploitation. Thirdly, the total product of a number of individuals working together is always greater than the total product of the same individuals working separately. To whom does the extra product belong,—to the workers, to society, which has made their coöperation possible, or to the capitalist who has brought them together with sufficient land and capital so as to make possible the production of this extra amount of wealth?

(g) The Concentration of Industry and the Centralization of Wealth.

The scientific socialists claim that in the capitalistic system of production there is ever present a tendency towards a concentration of industry and a centralization of wealth. They hold that industrial history discloses the fact that the unit of business organization has steadily increased in size as it has evolved from the individual entrepreneur through the partnership and the joint stock company to the modern corporation. The

market also has widened, growing from a local into a national, and finally into an international, market. This fact, together with the greater cost of modern processes, has necessitated vast accumulations of capital in order to carry on the production of wealth.

As the result of competition between corporations engaged in similar lines of industry, trusts have been formed. Further competition between these trusts, the difficulty of reinvesting dividends, and the recognition of the economies of combination and of large-scale production have caused larger trusts, or holding companies, to be organized, until to-day, according to the socialists, the more important branches of industry are centralized in the hands of a small group of capitalists. Along with this concentration of industry goes the centralization of wealth. This tendency is said to prevail in all fields, in manufacturing, agriculture, and mining, as well as in the wholesale and retail business. This concentration is expected to continue until all lines of industry have been fully concentrated and thoroughly organized.¹⁵ A few capitalists will then own those things which *all* of society uses for the purpose of supplying its needs. The socialists claim that this

¹⁵ Concentration of control, as well as concentration of ownership, is taken into consideration by the socialists.

state of affairs cannot long exist, and that in order to safeguard the interests of its citizens, society will be forced to undertake the *collective* ownership and operation of those industries.

The critics of Marxian economics declare that the theory of the concentration of industry is not in accord with the facts of the business world. In the first place, petty industrial enterprises and establishments persist and even increase in number. Secondly, in agriculture large-scale farming has failed, as is shown by the breaking up of the plantations of the South and the bonanza wheat farms of the West and Northwest. Intensive cultivation has proved its superiority over extensive cultivation. Thirdly, in the retail trade small stores persist in spite of the growth in the size and number of department stores. Fourthly, socialists exaggerate the tendency towards concentration. Lastly, an individual corporation, if well organized and satisfactorily managed, can compete successfully with a trust or holding company provided the latter obtains no unfair advantage in the form of rebates, railway tariffs, or political influence. The tendency in the development of governmental legislation is in direct line with the policy of providing equality of opportunity among competitors in all fields.

(4) The Theory of Increasing Misery.

One of the fundamentals of the Marxian system which played a very prominent part in the earlier years of the socialist propaganda, but which to-day has been abandoned by a number of scientific socialists, is the theory of increasing misery.

Marx declared that along with the concentration of industry the rich grow richer, while the oppression, servitude, degradation, and exploitation of the workers steadily increase. The latter sink more and more deeply into slavery, ignorance, and bestiality, and become more miserable, absolutely as well as relatively. But with this condition of affairs there "grows the revolt of the working class, a class always increasing in numbers, and disciplined, united, organized by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself,"¹⁶ until finally the workers rise against their misery and degradation, overthrow the capitalist class and bring about socialism.

The explanation of the promulgation of this theory by Marx is found in the economic and social conditions existing in Europe during his lifetime. The changing forms of industry had thrown thousands of men, women, and children out of


¹⁶ *Capital*, vol. i., pp. 836-837.

work; poverty, bestiality, and discontent were present on all sides; labor laws were of scant importance; trades-unions were weak; and deplorable conditions existed among the workers in the factories and upon the farms.

This theory, however, has been abandoned by the *leaders* of the socialist movement because they have realized, first, that it is impossible for an oppressed, enslaved, and degraded class to free itself (one cannot expect "political omnipotence to result from economic impotence"), and secondly, that the conditions of the workers have become increasingly more satisfactory through the activities of trade-unions and coöperative enterprises, and as a result of labor and factory laws, the widening sphere of governmental activities, welfare work on the part of the employers, and various other influences. It is still accepted, however, by a large number of socialists in all countries, and is used by them as one of the most valuable and telling arguments of their propaganda.

(i) The Catastrophe Theory.

The catastrophe theory merely explains the manner in which Marx thought that capitalistic society would be supplanted by socialism. In brief, it may be stated as a belief that the present



order of things is destined to disappear in a grand catastrophe.

As has already been explained, Marx claimed that economic development must necessarily lead to the complete concentration of industry on the one hand, and to the increasing misery of the workers on the other. Capitalism creates more wealth than it can consume, surplus values accumulate, and as the years pass panics will occur with increasing frequency. Finally a time comes when the powers of production can expand no further under a capitalistic system; vast armies of unemployed oppressed workers will exist, composed of men who will necessarily be driven by their increasing misery to overthrow capitalism and inaugurate the coöperative commonwealth. In the words of Marx, "the monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production which has sprung up and flourished along with, and under it. Centralization of the means of production and socialization of labor at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated."¹⁷ Thus Marx thought that the change would be in

¹⁷ *Capital*, vol. i., p. 837.

the nature of a social revolution, a sudden and complete change from capitalism to socialism.

The great objection to this theory is that it induces those who believe in it to look forward only to the ideal socialist state and thus neglect to attempt the removal of the evils of our present system. It encourages them to hope that things will grow increasingly worse so that socialism may come all the more quickly.

Any discussion of this theory resolves itself into a controversy between those who believe in revolutionary and those who believe in evolutionary changes. The tendency to-day among scientific socialists is away from a belief in this theory. This is because they feel that any changes in capitalism tending towards socialism must be gradual and evolutionary in character. Some also recognize the fact that in spite of all prophecies to the contrary, the forces of production have not outgrown the present needs of society and that capitalism still has many years of life ahead of it. Consequently, the socialists are laying more and more stress upon the necessity of removing present-day evils. They seem to have learned from experience that they cannot propose only a negative programme, but that they must offer something positive, something constructive in

nature. This change of position is shown by their more favorable attitude in later years towards such matters as trade-unionism, coöperative enterprises, labor and factory legislation, workingmen's insurance, and municipal and government ownership.

Classification of Scientific Socialists.

There are two general groups of scientific socialists: (1) Orthodox Marxists or Marxians, and (2) Revisionists.

(1) The Orthodox Marxists or Marxians accept *in toto* the theories of Marx, as originally formulated by him, and attack very bitterly all who suggest changes or modifications of any sort. They oppose reform or remedial measures, such as municipal and government ownership, labor and factory legislation, trade-union activities, and the like. They look forward only to a socialist régime, and can see nothing good either in capitalism or in anything other than socialism. They are revolutionary rather than evolutionary in their point of view. This group is rapidly decreasing in importance in all countries. In the United States it is represented by the almost extinct Socialist Labor Party and by the "Impossibilists" of later years.

(2) Revisionism is a comparatively late movement and dates approximately from the publication of a series of articles by Edward Bernstein in *Die Neue Zeit* in 1898, later issued in book form under the title of "Die Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus und die Aufgaben der Sozialdemokratie."¹⁸ The revisionists accept the doctrines of Marx as a basis for their economic and political ideas, but hold that revision is necessary in many respects. This is especially true of the theory of the concentration of industry, the theory of increasing misery, the catastrophe theory, and the economic interpretation of history with its accompanying doctrine of the class struggle. They still desire and agitate for the socialistic coöperative commonwealth, but lay main stress upon practical and immediate ameliorative measures. Unlike the Marxians, they claim that the work being done by the socialists in trade-unions and coöperative societies and by their active participation in the affairs of capitalistic governments is of paramount importance. They hold that socialism can come only as the result of a long series of evolutionary changes, and that it is advisable, therefore, to improve present living and

¹⁸ Translated by Edith C. Harvey under the title of *Evolutionary Socialism*.

working conditions so as to prepare the workers for its coming.

The spread of revisionism in Europe, especially in Germany, has not been very rapid. On the other hand, the socialist movement in the United States is almost wholly of a revisionist or opportunist character.

The revisionists may be further subdivided into (1) those socialists who make use of all opportunities, even to the extent of compromising with other parties in order to increase the socialist following, who seem to think only of the immediate present and who lose sight entirely of the socialist ideal of a coöperative commonwealth; and (2) those who do not compromise with other parties, but who use reform measures only as a means to an end, the end being socialism.

By some, syndicalism is classed as scientific socialism, by others as anarchism, and by still others as a form of labor organization. It contains certain characteristics of all of these movements and yet, accurately speaking, it is not any of them.

“Syndicalism, or the new unionism, is the most characteristic contribution made by France to the revolutionary working-class movement.” It is

confined for the most part to a rapidly growing and very active following in France and Italy, although a few adherents may be found in all countries. In brief, its creed is "that the working class must work out its own salvation by its own organs, by direct and not by deputed action, and that the *syndicat* or labor union, chief of these organs, is to be regarded not merely as an instrument for securing partial alleviations of the existing capitalistic system or as a recruiting-ground for socialist parties, but as itself the instrument of revolution and the cell of the future social organism."¹⁹ Its followers deplore the degeneracy of the modern socialist movement which they claim has become bourgeois in character. They are opposed to socialist participation in parliamentary government, and hence object to political action as a means of obtaining their demands. Their most favored weapon is the general strike. They are pessimists in that they ignore the immense progress made by humanity, and insist that the workers are in the most desperate straits, from which they can be rescued only by radical and revolutionary measures. They hold to the harshest interpretation of the class struggle, and object to the participation of "intellectuals" in the labor

¹⁹ Skelton, *Socialism*, pp. 267-268.

movement. They claim that as there is no saviour on earth or in heaven, the workers alone, through their unions or *syndicates*, must achieve their emancipation from the thralldom of capitalism. The syndicalists call upon the unions to "take over whatever functions they can snatch from the employer and from the state, preparing for the day when they will supersede both entirely," and will thus be able to inaugurate the reign of free coöperative labor, by means of which a multitude of loosely federated autonomous unions will be established, the members of which will labor in the workshops without masters. Thus syndicalism differs "from pure and simple trade-unionism in its revolutionary aims and its adherence to the class struggle doctrine, from anarchism in its exclusively proletarian appeal and its stress upon constructive measures, and from orthodox socialism in its distrust of political action and counter-emphasis on purely proletarian weapons and institutions." ²⁰

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CHAPTER V

THE INEVITABILITY OF SOCIALISM

SCIENTIFIC socialists claim that socialism is inevitable and that it will surely supplant capitalism just as capitalism supplanted feudalism. Among the more important arguments advanced in support of their contention are the following : (1) the evolution of society ; (2) the class struggle ; (3) the concentration of industry ; (4) the theory of increasing misery ; (5) the unemployed problem ; and (6) the economic contradictions of capitalism. Much has already been written in the preceding pages concerning these propositions, yet a discussion of the inevitability of socialism necessitates a brief restatement in this connection.

(1) The Evolution of Society.

The scientific socialists claim that inasmuch as society has evolved from earlier stages into capitalism, and inasmuch as it must continue to evolve, it will necessarily develop into a stage of socialism. This, they affirm, is true because the character or the stage of society is shaped or determined by

the dominant mode of production and exchange ; and, as under capitalism the tools of industry are privately owned, but collectively used, the next stage must be one in which they will be collectively owned as well as collectively used. Such an arrangement would be possible only under socialism.

In opposition to this position the critics of the socialist theories declare that the evolution of society need not inevitably result in socialism. It is impossible to prophesy what the future will bring forth. The next stage may possibly be one of "Benevolent Feudalism," one of voluntary coöperation, or one of private ownership with a very intensified form of collective control and operation.

(2) The Class Struggle.

The scientific socialists hold that all history is the history of class struggles, the character of the classes being determined by the prevailing economic conditions ; that throughout all history the workers have struggled up from slavery to their present position of political and partial economic freedom ; that with the passage of years all classes save two, — the workers and the capitalists — have been abolished ; and that at the present

time the contest lies between these two classes. With the growing class consciousness of the workers it is expected that there will come a united struggle on their part upon the political and the industrial fields against the capitalists, which can result only in a victory for the former and in the subsequent introduction of socialism.

The opponents of this idea claim that the socialists exaggerate the importance of the class struggle in the past, as well as in the present; that, although the middle class of yesterday is passing away, its place is being taken by a new middle class composed of well-paid foremen, superintendents, bookkeepers, managers, professional men, and the like; that the workers and the capitalists may and do have common economic, political, social, and religious interests; and that, although their interests may not be the same when it comes to a division of the products of industry, still, this one fact is not a sufficient reason for claiming that all history is the history of class struggles, or that the final outcome of such a clash of interests must inevitably result in bringing about a régime of socialism. It is also argued that the socialist movement throughout the world has abandoned the class struggle doctrine to a greater or less extent, depending upon the nation consid-

ered.¹ In addition to the above, certain critics also emphasize the fact that it is impossible to bring about a stage of society, whether it be socialism, capitalism, feudalism, or what not, by merely voting for it.

(3) The Concentration of Industry.

(4) The Theory of Increasing Misery.

(5) The Unemployed Problem.

These three propositions, although distinct from each other, are so closely related that they can be dealt with in a more satisfactory manner by considering them in connection with each other.

The scientific socialists hold that industry is being more and more concentrated, or "trustified"; that its control is becoming increasingly centralized in the hands of a few capitalists. This tendency is seen on all sides and in all industries. Along with this growing concentration and centralization at the one pole comes an "accumulation of misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality, mental degradation at the opposite pole."² The lot of the workers becomes increasingly more miserable.

¹ A. M. Simons, one of the most prominent of American socialists, has declared that "The socialist movement in the United States, as in many other countries, has to a certain extent got away from the class struggle."—*International Socialist Review*, viii., p. 180.

² *Capital*, vol. i., p. 709.

As industry expands, the capitalists are forced to find foreign markets in which to sell their surplus products. The workers who have produced these surplus commodities are unable to purchase them because they have received only a small portion of their product as wages. The search for foreign markets by the capitalists leads to a scramble for colonies, to a drumming up of trade in the Orient, and to "benevolent assimilation." But capitalism is a queer thing. "The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draw all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilization. . . . It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, *i.e.* to become bourgeois themselves. In a word, it creates a world after its own image."³ Thus other nations, which have been the consumers of the surplus products of capitalistic countries, become capitalistic themselves; they adopt modern methods of production and close their ports to foreign merchants and manufacturers. Later they, too, become producers of surplus products and go in search of foreign markets.

³ *Communist Manifesto*, pp. 18-19.

The scientific socialists declare that the periods of over-production will then come more and more frequently, panics will become the normal state of industry, an enormous unsolvable unemployed problem will arise, the workers will sink lower and lower in the scale of humanity, their condition will become increasingly worse, until, driven into class conscious action, they will vote for socialism and thus force society to adopt the collective ownership and operation of industry.⁴

In meeting these arguments dealing with the inevitability of socialism, the critics show that capital does not concentrate in the manner, and certainly not as rapidly as, Marx predicted; that the lot of the worker is becoming more satisfactory, and that crises are not caused solely by the over-production of commodities. They also claim that organized production (the trusts) tends to do away with the problem of over-production (hence also with panics and the unemployed problem) through the adjustment of supply to demand. At the same time it also brings into existence new trades and businesses by cheapening materials and liberating capital, by setting free a portion of the

⁴ For a more detailed discussion of the arguments offered against these contentions than is presented in this chapter, see Chapter V.

labor supply which can be utilized in these new lines of industry, and by increasing the demand for new kinds of commodities. Laborers, who are displaced by the introduction of new processes or as the result of combination, are absorbed either partly or wholly by the new industries resulting therefrom or by the expansion of other industries. But even granting that industry were becoming more concentrated, it would still devolve upon the socialists to show that socialism would inevitably result. The outcome might possibly prove to be the further strengthening of capitalism or the birth of some stage other than that of socialism.

It is also shown that with the greater bargaining power of the workers, obtained by means of their associations, political and industrial, they will be increasingly able to demand and obtain higher wages. This will enable them to purchase more of their products, thus preventing the rapid accumulation of surplus values, and assisting in the elimination of crises and the unemployed problem.

(6) Economic Contradictions of Capitalism.

Scientific socialists insist that capitalism contains within itself certain fundamental contradictions, in reality the germs of its own destruction.

These are to be found in certain phenomena, some of which have already been described.

(a) The first economic contradiction in capitalism is found in the collective use and the private ownership of the means of production and exchange. This contradiction, they claim, can be abolished only by socialism, under which collective ownership, as well as collective operation, would prevail.

(b) The second contradiction, according to the socialists, is that capitalists, in order to market their goods and thus turn surplus products into cash, are forced to lower the prices of their commodities. This makes possible, and also results in, a reduction of wages and a consequent diminution of the purchasing power of the workers, thus indirectly defeating the objects of the capitalists. Lowered prices cause lowered wages; lowered wages mean a reduced purchasing power on the part of the workers; the employer sells less, and consequently reaps smaller profits. This in its turn brings about the rapid accumulation of surplus values; panics occur more and more frequently; at the same time the trustification of industry progresses; misery increases; and in the end the workers find refuge in the inauguration of the socialist state. Thus it is that they declare

that capitalism brings about its own destruction.

(c) The third contradiction is that improved processes demand a greater accumulation of capital and its investment in constantly increasing sums in industrial enterprises. Improvements also lower the value of capital invested in existing processes. This with the falling rate of profit accelerates the concentration of industry. "One capitalist devours another," their numbers decrease, and the capitalist class at last ceases to function as a class, because a social class always presupposes a certain minimum of numbers. With a few capitalists on the one hand owning all industry, and a thoroughly organized class-conscious propertyless proletariat composed of millions of laborers on the other, the struggle for supremacy under such unequal circumstances cannot be other than of short duration, and must, so the scientific socialists say, result in the overthrow of capitalism and in the introduction of socialism.

Conclusion. (1) The impossibility of an indefinite continuance of production under capitalism must be proven by the socialists.

(2) If the validity of their destructive arguments is admitted, it still remains for the socialists to show beyond a doubt that society must inevitably evolve into socialism.

(3) If there are conditions in the present industrial system which seem to make for the coming of socialism, it does not necessarily follow that they are inherent in that system. They may merely be temporarily connected with it and may be eliminated with its further development.

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CHAPTER VI

METHODS OF OBTAINING COLLECTIVE OWNERSHIP

THE scientific socialists are continually questioned regarding the methods by which they propose that the collectivity shall obtain possession of the industries of the nation. Will the change from private to collective ownership be made gradually, one industry at a time, or will it be made at a single stroke? In either case, how will it be done?

In answering these questions the scientific socialists of to-day are practically unanimous in declaring that the change from capitalism to socialism must come as the result of evolution rather than revolution. First of all there must be a victory of the socialist party at the polls. The socialist officials would then prepare the way for the acquisition for some one important trustified industry by passing certain necessary laws, by amending the constitution, and by appointing sympathetic federal judges. If conditions were

then satisfactory for socialization to take place, the industry would be taken over by the socialist government. Some opponents of socialism argue that force would be necessary because the capitalists would refuse to part with their ownership of industry. The socialists in reply maintain that there could be no civil war over the matter of the socialization of industry because by the time that it was to take place the soldiers of the nation would have been won over to a belief in the principles of socialism and would refuse to take sides with the capitalists.

The scientific socialists state that they do not know what method or methods would be followed in securing the collective ownership of industry, but suggest that any of the following might prove to be satisfactory : —

(1) Voluntary bestowal. It is thought that perhaps many capitalists might be induced voluntarily to turn over their industries to the collectivity.

(2) Purchase. The collectivity might purchase those industries which it was deemed necessary and advisable to socialize.

(3) Pension. It is suggested that the collectivity might take over the industries needed and give their present owners a life pension.

(4) Competition. It is proposed by some that the collectivity might engage in industry and compete with the capitalists, gradually forcing them from the field and abolishing private ownership.

(5) Confiscation. The collectivity might confiscate all means of exploitation and appropriate them for its use. It is contended by the scientific socialists that the capitalists have obtained their wealth in the first instance by having appropriated it from the workers in a number of different ways, but primarily through the payment of rent, interest, and profits, and that its confiscation by society would merely be taking back that which was originally taken from the workers.

The impracticability of the first method, voluntary bestowal by the capitalists, is self-evident. Payment or purchase would involve the issuance of bonds and would burden the nation with a debt the proportions of which would be beyond comprehension. It would also probably compel the payment of interest to the bondholders, to which policy the socialists must logically object. Some have suggested that the imposition of income, inheritance, and property taxes would prove to be of great service in reducing the obligations of the state in case the industries were purchased by the collectivity. Pensions, as would also be the

case with interest on bonds, would have to be taken from the product of the workers, thus making impossible the realization of the socialist ideal of "To the laborer his full product." These two methods would also introduce the question of inheritance, *i.e.* whether or not the bonds and pensions would be passed on to the heirs of their recipients in the first instance. The establishment of competing enterprises would cause a great waste of capital and would ultimately, though indirectly, result in the confiscation of the industrial property of those capitalists against whom competition was waged. Confiscation is objected to on the grounds of justice and because of the determined resistance with which it would be met. Vandervelde, the leading Belgian socialist, has said, "There is no doubt that of all forms of social liquidation, expropriation without indemnity, with the resistance, the troubles, the bloody disturbances which it would not fail to produce, would be in the end the most costly." ¹

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CHAPTER VII

OUTLINES OF A POSSIBLE SOCIALIST STATE

ALTHOUGH the Utopian socialists outline with the greatest detail the plan or scheme of their ideal state, the scientific socialists almost consistently refuse to construct even a tentative scheme of things which they expect to exist under socialism. To a certain extent they are justified in so doing because it is impossible to prophesy with any degree of accuracy what the future will bring forth even under capitalism. On the other hand, however, it must be admitted that it is no more than just to everybody concerned that something be known regarding what institutions the socialists propose to substitute for those of our present social order. Several attempts have been made by prominent socialists, as well as by some non-socialists, to formulate in an indefinite sort of way the scheme of things which might possibly exist under socialism, and while they do not bear the stamp of approval of the socialist organizations, they afford "something more tangible by way of a description of the future state than the bald statement that it

will be free from the struggle between exploiting and exploited classes.”¹ The following briefly stated outline is a general summary of a number of the schemes which have been suggested.

Politically the coöperative commonwealth would be as ideally democratic as it would be possible to make it. The representative form of government with its courts, legislatures, and executives might still exist, but the power of final decision would lie entirely with the voters, the right to vote being shared equally by men and women, excluding, of course, aliens, criminals, lunatics, and minors. The initiative, the referendum, and the recall would make the “political machinery responsive to the popular will,” while the adoption of proportional representation would enable the minority to have its opinions voiced upon all public questions.

Regarding “the economic structure of the new society,” John Spargo, one of the leading socialists in the United States, declares that it “will at least include the following measures of socialization : (1) Ownership of all natural resources, such as land, mines, forests, waterways, oil wells, and so on ; (2) operation of all means of transportation and communication other than those of purely

¹ Spargo, *Socialism*, p. 278.

personal service; (3) operation of all industrial production involving large compound capitals and associated labor, except where carried on by voluntary, democratic coöperation, with the necessary regulation by the state; (4) organization of all labor essential to the public service, such as the building of schools, hospitals, docks, roads, bridges, sewers, and the like; the construction of all the machinery and plant requisite to the social production and distribution, and of things necessary for the maintenance of those engaged in such public services as the national defence and all who are wards of the state; (5) a monopoly of the monetary and credit functions, including coinage, banking, mortgaging, and the extension of credit to private enterprise."² There might possibly remain a considerable amount of private production and exchange, especially in connection with the production and sale of articles of luxury and of commodities not in general demand. Small garden plots and small farms under the control of the individual might also survive, so long as no one were exploited as a result thereof. The goal of the socialists is the abolition of the exploitation of the workers, and nothing which would prevent the realization of this ideal could be permitted under socialism.

² *Socialism*, p. 300.

The question of the organization and management of socialized industry is without doubt the most difficult of solution. How are the industries to be managed under socialism? To carry out the ideals of the socialists everything must be done in accordance with democratic principles, otherwise socialism would not differ materially from government ownership. Great bureaus or boards of experts chosen by civil service methods, having charge of the management of the socialized industries, would most certainly not be in harmony with democratic principles. Such a scheme of things could not be called an "industrial democracy." The workers employed in any socialized industry must have a voice in its management. This, it is claimed, could be obtained through the use of the initiative, the referendum, and the recall. The workers would thus be able to choose their superintendents, fix their hours, wages, and conditions of employment. Precautions would have to be taken, however, to safeguard the interests of employees in other industries and of the public in general; otherwise, what would prevent unheard of abuses and oppressive conditions from arising? Industry would be so organized as to eliminate the wastes which to-day characterize competitive production and exchange.

The middlemen, speculators, advertisers, traders, and many others, so necessary to the capitalistic system, would disappear.

Under socialism the individual would have practically the same rights and privileges that he possesses at the present day, with but one notable exception,—he would not be permitted to engage in any business which would enable him to exploit those who worked for him. He would, however, have the right to do anything that did not interfere with the welfare of society. As under socialism, all exploitation would cease, no able-bodied male citizen would live off of the results of another's labor except in payment for having performed some sort of service for that individual or for society at large. Teachers, artists, musicians, actors, preachers, etc., would be supported, as at present, by those whom they served. No person would be unemployed; work would exist for all. Even though labor might be made compulsory, there is no occasion for the belief on the part of some of the critics of socialism that jobs would be assigned to each individual by the authorities. Men would choose their professions as they do to-day. Overcrowding in one line might be remedied by a lowering of wages owing to the working of the law of

supply and demand, although a minimum wage law might be adopted so as to prevent wages from falling too low in any one craft.

Inasmuch as under the proposed ideal conditions of a coöperative commonwealth rent, interest, and profits would not be paid out of the worker's product, it is urged by the socialists that the laborers would receive a higher wage and consequently would be able to maintain a higher standard of living than is possible at the present time. This would make for education, for recreation, for better lives, for better homes, and for better conditions in general. There is no basis for the statement that socialism would destroy either the home or religion. Individuals would not be forced to live in barracks; to dress, think, and act alike; or to belong to the same religious sect.

Such, in brief, is a résumé of what might possibly occur under socialism. Even though one puts aside all mention of those difficulties which would have to be overcome in obtaining possession of the means of production and exchange and in organizing them upon a socialistic or collective basis, tasks which in themselves are so difficult and of such stupendous proportions as to stagger one's imaginative powers when once fully appreciated, there still remain many very serious objections

which, in all fairness, can be urged against any proposed scheme of socialism.

One of the more important arguments against an "industrial democracy" is the claim that the workers could not satisfactorily conduct the socialized industries of the nation by means of the democratic measures which have been outlined above. The validity of this objection is partially sustained by the evidence of the lack of interest taken in the management of coöperative and similar enterprises by coöperators, and by the customary failure of all ventures in which too many cooks have spoiled the broth. Two other matters which must be taken into consideration are the ceaseless activities of the self-seeking individual, always eager for "a soft berth" and a prominent position, and the possibilities of graft and corruption. The workers are eager for a higher standard of living, but are they desirous of undertaking the responsibility of managing the industries of the nation, to say nothing of the question which can be raised regarding their ability to do so?

Another matter upon which some opponents of socialism lay considerable stress is the impossibility of carrying on agriculture under a régime of collectivism. The difficulties of farming the *vast areas* of land necessary to supply the people

with foodstuffs and the task of marketing the farming products appear unsurmountable to a large number of people. Thus far, the socialists have done comparatively little constructive thinking in this connection and cannot be said to have proposed any generally accepted policy other than that which is contained in the phrase "the collective ownership of land."

The problem of how to devise and introduce a just system of remunerating the workers in a socialist state is another question which should be squarely and fairly met by the advocates of socialism, but as yet their party platforms and official declarations are strangely silent regarding it. The slogan of "Give to labor its full product" is an excellent bit of propaganda, but it cannot be worked out satisfactorily in actual industry, for how is it possible to calculate the full product of brakemen, bookkeepers, superintendents, and a thousand and one other kinds of employees! The plan of an equality of wages does not appeal to a majority of scientific socialists and is seldom mentioned in these later days, although it was the method most commonly proposed by the earlier Utopian socialists. To pay a worker in accordance with his needs is a proposition too indefinite to warrant serious comment. Some have proposed

that wages be fixed by the amount of socially necessary labor time put in by the worker, but in this connection one meets with the problem of how to reduce skilled labor time to terms of unskilled labor time. It has been suggested that wages be determined by the law of supply and demand, but this scheme would prove to be contradictory to the ideals of the socialists inasmuch as it would prevent the payment of the full product.

Would wages be paid in money or in time checks? The latter would be more in harmony with the theories of the socialists, for it would somewhat facilitate payment on the basis of the number of hours of socially necessary labor expended. In spite of this, however, it is seriously objected to by many socialists, who propose instead that wages be paid in money. Valid arguments can be raised against both propositions.

What would be the effect upon the individual and upon society of having every person assured of employment, for such is the goal of the socialists? To-day the fear of unemployment forces the worker to put forth his best efforts so as to retain his job. Wherein would lie the incentive under socialism? Would not the same sort of inertia, which is to be noted to-day among governmental *employees*, be present even to a greater extent

among all the employees of the collective state? Socialists argue that there need be no fear on this score because the workers would realize that they were laboring for themselves and would therefore put forth their best efforts. On the other hand, it must be remembered that many coöperative enterprises have failed for this very reason, even though the coöperators realized that they were their own employers and that the returns of their company would be greater the harder they worked.

The question also arises whether or not there would be danger of over-population in a socialist state through the working of the Malthusian law of population. Population, being held back only by "the actual pressure of famine and disease (arising from an insufficient food supply), or by the prudential motives which restrain men from undertaking the responsibility of marrying and raising families upon incomes insufficient to provide the necessities of life," would it not increase by leaps and bounds under socialism through the consequent removal of these restraints? The scientific socialists, however, declare that a rise in the standard of living does not make for an increased population, and offer as proof of their statement the fact that it is usually the very poor, the people who have the lowest wages and the

lowest standard of living, that have the largest families.

Some critics of the socialist doctrines maintain that socialism would have to come simultaneously in all countries, a thing which would be impossible; otherwise, that nation which first became socialized would experience unheard-of difficulties in its relations with other nations which had remained capitalistic. These difficulties, for the most part, would arise in connection with the question of immigration and as a result of the change in the standards of value and of money.

These objections are but a few of those most frequently urged against conditions which might prevail in the prophesied stage of socialism. They are sufficient to show that many grave questions remain unanswered by those who advocate the introduction of a collective state of society.

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CHAPTER VIII

SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER. SOCIALISM AND TRADE-UNIONISM

THE scientific socialists in late years have, to a very great extent, changed their position upon the question of trade-unionism. Although not openly opposing its tenets, the early leaders of scientific socialism were not strongly inclined to accept them. The International Workingmen's Association, organized by Marx in 1864, and led by him until its dissolution in 1876, was not a trade-union in any sense of the word. It was an international association of workingmen formed for the purpose of spreading socialistic ideas, and of bettering the conditions of the workers by means other than those followed to-day by trade-unionists.

Socialists in the past have opposed trade-unionism on the grounds that—

(1) It can only lessen the exploitation of the laboring class ; it cannot abolish it.

(2) Collective bargaining is both inconclusive and enormously costly. In the end unions cannot help but fail to be productive of results, and as a

consequence will then be forced into politics, and will fight out their battles against the employers upon the political field and under the banner of socialism.

(3) The field of union activities is very limited, being confined for the most part to union members, the majority of whom are males.

(4) The unions touch only a few of the vital interests of their members, such as questions of hours, wages, and working conditions in general, and do not concern themselves with the larger and more important problems, in connection with which the workers have well-defined class interests. The struggle upon the industrial field is but one-half of the battle, because political issues, in the majority of cases, are also of great economic importance.

(5) Unions are frequently led by unscrupulous, self-seeking men, whom the socialists designate as "labor fakirs."

With the growing strength of Organized Labor, the socialists have realized that the unions can be used for the purpose of advancing the propaganda of socialism, and as a consequence they have become very active in trade-union circles. Their present point of view is briefly set forth in the *following* five propositions:—

(1) The trade-unions are an outgrowth of the conditions of capitalistic industry.

(2) They are a necessity in the struggle of the workers against their employers.

(3) All members of the socialist party are therefore advised to join the union of their craft, so as to further the struggle of their class against their employers upon the industrial field.

(4) Political differences of opinion do not justify a division of the workers upon the industrial or the political fields. They should always present a united front to their employers.

(5) It is to the interest of the working class that its members be educated in socialist doctrines, and that they be taught "to vote as they strike," *i.e.* in accordance with their class interests. Thus the socialists at present are pursuing a policy of "boring from within," *i.e.* of joining the unions and working from within with the idea of converting the members to socialism, rather than of following the policy of remaining outside the unions and attempting to force them into class-conscious political action.

In brief, the present-day scientific socialists do not oppose trade-unionism. They hold that the union should be the weapon of the working class upon the industrial field, and that the socialist

party should be its weapon upon the political field. It is only by this means that it would be possible in every instance for the proletariat to act as a unit in its struggle with the capitalist class.

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CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

IN their criticism of capitalistic society the position of the scientific socialists is, for the most part, well taken. As a result of this criticism many of the more flagrant abuses of capitalism have been abolished. In this regard the socialist agitation has performed an invaluable service to mankind and has amply justified the enthusiasm and efforts of its followers. On the other hand, however, serious objections can be raised not only against the Marxian theories, upon which the movement is supposed to be based, but also against the proposals of the socialists regarding what is to be the order of things under their prophesied social and industrial system. The socialists can also be very adversely criticised for underestimating the great complexity of the present industrial organization. Too many of them do not realize the difficulties which would have to be met in bringing about its socialization.

As a result of the constant modification of party principles and as a consequence of the adaptation

of their programme to current needs with the idea of grappling with present-day problems, although some critics say solely for the purpose of vote-getting, constructive policies of various sorts are being constantly advanced by the socialists. So noticeable has been this change in their attitude that many now contend that the socialist party in a majority of countries has become merely a radical labor party and has truly lost sight of its former goal, *i.e.* socialism. This situation is also responsible for the late and rapidly growing opinion that socialism and the socialist movement are two distinct things, the former being a belief in the Marxian theories and in the prophesied stage of collective ownership, while the latter is nothing more than a radical political party and is concerned with the Marxian principles only through a frequent though unintelligent use of the terms which Marx employed in advancing his ideas. There is, indeed, much truth in the statement that the socialist movement does not stand or fall with the substantiation or the refutation of the Marxian doctrines.

Finally, it can be truly said that the socialists fail to recognize the strength and the advantages of capitalism. They see only its weaknesses and abuses. Capitalism as yet is very young, being

scarcely more than a century old, and one ought not to expect it to be a perfect or an ideal state. Possibly many or all of the evils which exist to-day may be removed in the future, leaving only the advantages to persist. Capitalism is not tottering on its last legs, as many socialists claim ; it is still very strong and active, and its end is not yet in sight. Marx, Engels, and other socialists of early vintage predicted its overthrow as destined to occur some decades ago, but its dissolution appears to be as far as ever, or possibly farther than ever, removed from the present. It is because of these things that the socialists can be justly criticised for underestimating the possibilities and the value of social reform measures and for scoffing at those who propose them as an end in themselves.

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